
Winter grazing standards deferred

National standards creating additional control on winter grazing, designed to enhance and maintain water quality (NES-FW), were to have taken effect in May 2021. The standards in the NES-FW that apply to winter grazing require that – the area grazed be less than 50 ha or 10% of the property (whichever is the greater); the landslope of the sown paddock must be less than 10 degrees; there are specified setbacks from waterways, restrictions on depth of pugging, along with re-sowing requirements. We discussed the application of the NEW-FW standards further in our previous article [here](#).

See link: [freshwater reforms confirmed](#)

Many regional Councils were not in a position to begin monitoring compliance with those standards this year, and a number of groups representing the farming industry made it clear that further time was needed to be able to implement the new practices.

The Government has just confirmed that it will defer the introduction of the majority of specific requirements for intensive winter grazing until May 2022. The Ministers' announcement states that this is in return for a commitment by the farming sector to make immediate improvements for the coming season, and to enable an intensive winter grazing arm plan module to be

developed for incorporation into freshwater farm plans in 2022. The Ministers also signaled that increased monitoring and reporting by regional councils would occur in the interim. Rules preventing the expansion of intensive winter grazing will continue to apply.